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HOW'S THAT?

HOWE'S

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HOW'S THAT?

INCLUDING

"A CENTURY OF GRACE"

BY

HARRY FURNISS

VERSES

BY

E. J. MILLIKEN

"ARRY" OF *Punch*.

AND

CRICKET SKETCHES

BY

E. B. V. CHRISTIAN

AUTHOR OF "AT THE SIGN OF THE WICKET"



BRISTOL

J. W. ARROWSMITH, QUAY STREET

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P R E F A C E .

CRICKET is a most unattractive subject for the artist. It is, in fact, impossible to make a satisfactory picture of our national game: a crowd of ordinary sightseers in the foreground and also in the distance, and between these a large expanse of green grass, with a few white spots—representing the cricketers—dotted here and there, is all the material the artist has at command, and, twist it as he may, or take it from any point of sight he selects, it remains formal, flat, and unattractive. Neither in colour nor composition is it possible to “make a picture” with such material. Therefore, the artist determined to paint a picture is driven to the picturesque village green, here to find metal more attractive. The rustic figures, informally grouped, the pretty

corner of the church, and the rural surroundings suffice in a measure to compensate for the objectionable white flannels standing forth on the green background; and here he can with some certainty introduce a red waistcoat or even a brown coat. But what the artist gains in prettiness the picture loses in interest. The unartistic lover of cricket cares little for the spreading oak, or the village green, or the doings of the rustic players. The unsightly gas works at The Oval, or the bricks and mortar at Lord's, conjure up in his mind the mighty deeds of Graces and Stoddarts, Reads and Abels.

And it is not only the brush that fails, but the lens also. Of course, the ordinary photograph of the cricketer, whether he sits or stands at ease, is a portrait. But what about him in action? If he is told to pose before a camera—if he is a batsman, he fails to get the proper swing, as he is only watching the lens, and not inspired to the correct action by seeing the ball flying towards him from the muscular arm of a Lohmann or a Richardson. If a bowler posing, I ask you if I am not correct in saying that, in

all the portraits you see in the many photographs published of bowlers, do they not look more as if they were lifting weight ridiculously small than delivering the ball with Herculean strength and the perfection of science? No, the photograph must be taken unawares, and perhaps before this little preface is published we may find depicted by the Cinematograph some of our well-known cricketers at play. But these have to be taken at a distance, when the game is in progress, and then enlarged; and I would like to see anyone venture on to a cricket field during the progress of some good match! The poor photographer would have to provide himself with dummy cameras, as used when photographing at the Zoo. Photographers prepare to photograph one of the wild animals through the bars; they have to thrust through at first some resemblance of a camera, which will soon be jumped upon by the infuriated animal and knocked to pieces. But when the animal gets accustomed to the instrument, then is produced the real camera to take the animal in repose. And I venture to think that any

photographer presenting himself within the prescribed area of one of our well-known grounds, during a great match, would bring forth more anger and energetic destruction than could be found even within the cages of the Zoo.

Fearing that some of my readers may call "How's that?" to this assertion of mine that cricketers are distorted in the camera, I will refer them to that bright little book written by the "little Guv'nor" of the Surrey Club, Mr. Abel, and see if in some of the reproductions in that book, taken by the camera, he might not well stand, as regards height, equal between Mr. Grace or Mr. Gunn?

So I meditated one morning last summer, and, finding my studio oppressive and my eyes tired with my work, I wandered off to Lord's to rest my eyes on the greensward and stimulate my energies by watching the exertions of others. Just as I got into my seat "W.G." walked out of the pavilion, accompanied by Mr. Stoddart, to open the game. I may mention that at this time the excitement was tremendous as to

whether "W.G." would make another *century*. As luck would have it, the Champion was in fine form—playing in faultless style. By the time the day had finished, I had seen the renowned cricketer to perfection—I had seen him make his *century*. He was caught before he had progressed very far in the second hundred. I returned to my studio with the massive form of "W.G." well imprinted upon my brain. Now, it is much easier for the most moderate cricketer to catch a batsman than it is for an artist or even a photographer. But I gave myself a task as soon as I returned, which, at the request of the popular publisher of this little book, who is a great admirer of cricket, I reluctantly now make public. I put before me a hundred half-sheets of notepaper, and, without any preliminary sketching or alteration, I undertook to make a hundred sketches of W. G. Grace from memory, one on each piece of paper, and that if I failed with one I was "caught out." But I carried out my pencil, and my innings was closed as the clock struck the hour of midnight, although more than once during my inky

innings I had, in fairness to the great Cricketer, to call out "How's that?" for I feel that I have let myself off in my innings too frequently, as a glance at these rapid sketches will easily show. It is well, therefore, to sandwich the sketches of *A Century of Grace* with the capital verses of Mr. E. J. Milliken, of *Punch*, and the interesting anecdotes of Mr. E. B. V. Christian. But, modest as our little joint effort is, we have done it in the best spirit, for there are not four more ardent admirers of our national game than the Writers, the Artist, and the Publisher of *How's That?*

Harry Furniss

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HOW'S THAT?

Ode to May.

BY A COCKNEY CRICKETER.

(Some way after the May Day Chorus in George Darley's *Sylvia*;
or, the *May Queen*.)

"Does not the 1st of each succeeding May strike a chord in every
cricketer's heart?"—*Jerks In from Short Leg*.

BATSMAN (*overhauling his green baize bag, sings*):—

O MAY, thou art a merry time!—

Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!

When "Oval" bells begin to chime,

And the Captain scans his nobbly "tail."

When Cricket Club Committees meet,

And cheerily blows the challenge-horn,

And the green baize bag once more we greet,

That holds the bat, well oiled, though worn.

O May, thou art a merry time!—

Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!

When the nets are up and the pitch is prime,

And Lohmann once again is hale.



FROM THE PAVILION.

Thornton's Eleven, bad to beat,
Prepare to take the Cantabs on;
And gossip goes of a trundler fleet
Who's going to "knock out" Richardson.

O May, thou art a merry time!—
Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!
And Cricket Teams from a distant clime
Prepare to make Bull's *prestige* pale.

The Cornstalks or the Yankees come,
Or Africanders o'er the sea.
Hark! hear'st not thou the Indian drum?
'Tis Ramjamsingh or Jamsetzee!

O May, thou art a merry time!—
Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!
Stoddart's first "Century"! Ah! that's prime
Now, W. G., *you* will not fail.

That big black beard is tinged with grey,
And you—they say—are forty-five,
Yet where's the youngster of to-day
So good to keep the game alive?

O May, thou art a merry time!—
Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!
I'm longing for the "feel" sublime
Of my first "sixer" o'er the rail.

Sing Willow, Willow! Aye, come out,
A well-spliced Bat of last year's fray!
You're good for a few more games, no doubt,
And one more "century" anyway!

O May, thou art a merry time!—
Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!
The "Oval Bard" again will rhyme,
The "Guv'nor" smite 'em like a flail.

"Our Walter" will fresh laurels win,
The "Surrey Crowd" will shout for Brockwell;
And "Maurice," when his eye is in,
Will spank 'em from Vauxhall to Stockwell!

O, May *may* be a merry time!—
Sing hey! the Bat, the Ball, the Bail!
Dear Phœbus, bless our pluviose clime,
Let Willow not through Water fail!

Summer's the time for Batsman bliss,
So taste it, Sloggers, whilst ye may:
For who can tell that joy like this
Will come on any July day?

O May, thou art the merriest time!—
Sing hey! Dry Wickets, Bat, Ball, Bail!!
Fair prophecy of joys sublime,
Cricketers' joys that ne'er grow stale.



TO THE PAVILION.

Coupled with the Name of U.G.

LUNCHEON was finished. Those of us who were over thirty realised the world of regret that may lie in a fact so simple. But to make it worse the rain had come on; the smaller boys even had fled to shelter, and the stumps stood alone upon the Heath. From Albury to Abinger Hatch the enthusiasts had come to see the match between our local eleven and our famous visitors; and all of them looked dismally at the clouds, which gave no sign of relenting for an hour. Then the Chairman had an idea.

“Gentlemen!” he said, with the expostulatory cough which marks the practised chairman, rising to obtain silence for his first toast; “we have here a very distinguished visitor” (he looked at The Professor and bowed), “and I am sure if he would favour us with a few remarks we should have occasion to—ahem—to rejoice at this interruption of the game.”

This was an extreme view ; but we felt that a speech would fill the time, and we cheered dutifully. The Professor wiped his gold-rimmed glasses and rose.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “I am a serious person. Much as I delight in cricket, my own work as an historian has led me to less attractive fields ; and I am afraid that any remarks I can offer ——” We dissented politely, but without great heartiness. “Well,” he said, “perhaps you may be interested in a parallel which may be drawn between the expansion of England and the growth of cricket. My remarks shall be on the subject of

CRICKET AND THE EMPIRE.

Gentlemen, historians have invented many theories to account for the greatness and prosperity of this realm, but none of them have rightly guessed the secret. They have prated of Magna Charta and Reform Bills, of trial by jury, and our glorious constitution ; but, with a pedant’s short sightedness, they have overlooked cricket, the true secret of England’s greatness. Even our own

generation has not fully realised the truth. We are less confident of the virtues of twelve men in a box, the right of asylum, and our other insular idiosyncracies; we have realised that strictly we have no constitution, and regard with modified enthusiasm our system of government; but we have been still content to think of cricket as a mere game. Yet the great truth is plain; it is written large for him who runs to read. It is to cricket that we owe the vast extent of our territory, the empire on which the sun never sets.

“Consider the facts. For centuries we had made a pother with our internal and domestic affairs, and our progress differed not greatly from that of other lands. We had meddled from time to time with indifferent success in foreign affairs, but, from the loss of France, remained till the middle of the 18th century with only one foreign possession worth naming. Cricket as yet was not. Then cricket arose, and for a hundred and fifty years has grown and flourished wondrously. And in that poor century and a half, stirred by the great impulse of the glorious game, we have created colonies and dependencies with a population of two

hundred and fifty millions, have hoisted the Union Jack in four continents, and painted the map of the world red. Sir J. R. Seely thought we did this in a fit of absence of mind. The truth is that we were unconscious not of our motive, but of its impulse. Our minds were filled with the majestic tradition of the game, and the expansion of England was inevitable.

“The first recorded cricket match was played in 1746; one may, perhaps, assume that from 1700 the game had been progressing towards perfection. By 1750, although not perfect, its strength was matured, its influence beginning to be widely felt. What was the consequence? A few years later we won the fight of Plassy, and laid the foundations of our Indian Empire; and we made 1759 the most glorious year in our annals by the victories of Quebec, Quiberon, and Minden. So rapid and so great was the influence of the game. Doubtless the faint beginnings of the Indian Empire had been made before Plassy; so had there been the first growth of cricket before Kent met England in Goodman’s Fields. From the time of these two great events, every national triumph has

been presaged by some event of importance in the development, or for every national disaster there has been the compensation of a great advance, in the sport. In 1775 came the American war, which ended in the loss of the colonies; but at the same time we ceased to make our wicket of two stumps and a hole in the ground. We added a third stump, and the Old World redressed the balance of the New. In 1789 came the French Revolution, and Europe shook; but England had made secure her position by founding the M.C.C. Yet in England, too, there was warning that the older order was changing. Hambledon played its last match, and Parliamentary Reform began to be talked of. The beginnings of county cricket were made, and forthwith we won the battle of the Nile. The second Lord's ground was established, and its consequences were seen in the fresh triumph of Trafalgar. The third and last Lord's ground was founded, and promptly we reaped fresh laurels where we killed in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. The death of Pitt threw the country in mourning, but we made good the national loss by instituting matches between Gentlemen and

Players, and founding clubs at the universities. Sawdust was introduced on cricket fields, and soon it appeared at St. Stephen's, and our government became a government by debate. The cricket world about 1850 was rent by the controversy as to fair bowling; and in the political world the Manchester School became popular, and the policy of snubbing the colonies and cutting them adrift. Happily both dangers were averted. Cricket reached its full development, became universally practised and universally popular, and as it asserted its claims the national spirit rose as in the days of the game's youth; and at the same time we have added to our territory in every quarter of the globe, and now no craven dares talk of abandoning any part of our England beyond the seas.

“This is the merest outline of a parallel which might be demonstrated in detail. The Duke of Wellington half realised the great truth when he uttered his oft-quoted saying about Waterloo and the Eton playing fields; but his statement lacked precision. If historians will examine minutely the doings of either the pioneers or the main guard of our advancing empire, they

will find that cricket and cricket only is the real inspiration of their deeds.

“Gentlemen, I add but one word more. If during the last half-century our empire has marvellously and beyond all precedent increased, why is it? Because cricket has flourished, fired by the achievements and stimulated by the example of our national hero, Mr. William Gilbert Grace. Gentlemen, I conclude with this toast: ‘Cricket, the Empire, and W.G.’ ”

It was the end of the summer in which the champion reached his hundredth century, and the toast was received uproariously. When the applause subsided the rain had not, and the Chairman looked round for a local orator. His eye fell—it could hardly fail—on The Stout Party. Now a stout man is always exposed to chaff, and he jumped at the opportunity of uttering a long-meditated apology. His few impromptu remarks, he said, would be upon the subject of

THE STOUT CRICKETER.

“Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,” he said, “far be it from me to say that Dr. Grace is

stout; but his form is, let us say, manly. You will remember that the Queen of the Fairies in *Iolanthe*, a lady of noble proportions, remarked that she saw no objection to stoutness in moderation; yet, in men at least, stoutness (like the American judge) is always an object of contempt. In an athlete especially, obesity provokes derision. During the late football season a very competent goalkeeper was unkindly desired by the crowd, merely on account of his waist dimension, to go home and play with his grandchildren. In some sports Falstaff's failing would be a fatal objection; a corpulent coxswain is an impossibility. It says much for the gentle art of cricket that stoutness, if a disadvantage, is not an absolute disqualification. Indeed, one poet of the game, 'W. Bolland,' appeals directly to the fat man's good qualities.

'The ball the *stout* cricketer urges
Cleaves a pathway of peace o'er the plain,'

says the well-known Zingari song. There was something good-natured in the deliveries of Alfred Shaw. The balls which Richardson and Mr. Spofforth urge are not at all peaceful;

they lack the geniality of Shaw's style, or Burton's. Doubtless obesity is some incumbrance to a batsman: like honest Jack Falstaff, the stout cricketer feels he is not a swallow, an arrow or a bullet. But he often atones for lack of pace by superior judgment. It is beautiful to see him, standing midway between the wickets, watch the ball going between the fieldsmen to the boundary, 'conscious' as the Oxford poet says, 'of an unquestioned four.'

"Another poet, not named in Dr. Traill's Directory of the Lower Slopes, has celebrated with fine discrimination the joys and sorrows of the stout cricketer. I happened to take up the other day a book called, *Cassandra and Other Poems*, by R. Wheeldon Baddeley, and I read:

'Not of that sort is he
Which lounges by the tent to kill
The time with levity;
Nor loudly boastful of his skill,
Telling how (in a match you didn't see)
He drove a slow for six, or smote to leg
A four, or cut a three,
Or over a tent-peg
Tumbled, but made his catch;—not boastful thus
Is the *stout cricketer* or frivolous.'

“These vanities belong to the young men in violent coloured blazers, which used to offend the eye of ‘F. G.’ A more tolerant spirit, too, pervades his criticisms of his juniors, although he feels the inferiority of modern cricket to that of his youth,

. ‘While
Heavily on a bench he sits
Smoking a pipe, and with a critic’s gaze
Upon the younger batsmen of his side,
Recalls old cricket memories from the haze
Of time, not loudly to deride,
But calmly to disparage the wild play
“Which, sir, the youngsters of the present day—”’

“The stout cricketer’s own performances may not rival those of the cracks fresh from college, but are at least respectable. He bats fairly, and, says Mr. Baddeley, ‘he bowls—swift underhand.’ So, doubtless, did ‘Lumpy,’ the Surrey hero, who helped to beat Kent—Lumpy, whose real name was Stevens, but was called Lumpy ‘because he was so fat.’ Of the stout man’s fielding the poet says little, save that he struggles to ‘get peel’d, when he, alack! must after dinner field.’ That, of course, is a trial.

Sometimes on tented plain,
The only veteran there,
I have seen him, running, mirthful plaudits gain
From athlete youth, or girl-spectators fair ;
And I have pitied him as seeming strange,
Misplaced among the rest, to him mere boys,
And fear'd his memories might sadly range
Back to fled youth and unreturning joys ;
But these fine fancies don't, I think, occur
To my respectable *stout cricketer*.'

" Perhaps Mr. Baddeley underestimates the sensibility of the stout, as he undervalues their performances. It is not the least of Dr. Grace's services to cricket that he has shown that the race is not always to the slim ; that to be pre-eminent in the sport one need be, like the young Falstaff, but an eagle's talon in the waist. And herein he only follows an old tradition of the game. Half the heroes of Hambledon were portly men. Their chief himself, the elder Nyren, was 'a very stout man,' and Frame, and Aylward. Mr. Ward grew somewhat circular. Lillywhite was 'active though thick.' Alfred Mynn, that doughty hero, inhabited a form which the poet thought 'nobly moulded,' but the artists depicted as more than a little redundant. He

was, says Mr. Daft, 'for a cricketer, the biggest man I ever saw.' And Mr. Aislabie (Peter Steele's uncle), immortalised in *Tom Brown*, was 'at least 17 stone.' The stout cricketer can boast distinguished exemplars. I ask you then to drink with me to the health of 'All Stout Cricketers, coupled with the name of W.G.' "

"I think," said the visitors' secretary, obeying the Chairman's commands, "that we are apt to overlook the importance to the future of the game of Dr. Grace's teaching. Coaches are important, but most youngsters have no coaches. They learn their cricket from books. I myself tried to do so, and I will tell you my experience of my guide, which was called

'THE PENNY CRICKETER.'

The whole art of cricket is surely cheap at a penny. Many men have vainly sought to acquire it at much greater cost. But it was recently my good fortune to see in a shop window in a back street, among ball-room guides and last year's valentines, a *brochure* giving the desired counsel. There for a penny you could

learn 'the laws of single wicket, rules as to bets, and everything a learner will require to know to make him A PERFECT CRICKETER.' Now I had long wished to be a perfect cricketer, but my attempts had not resulted in perfection; indeed, quite the contrary. Evidently this was just the book for me. We begin at the beginning. 'The stock-in-trade of a cricket club consists of a ball, bats, and wickets.' I should have thought one ball insufficient, but it seems not; the same ball is used by both sides indiscriminately. However, this is the manager's business. It was the directions as to play that concerned me. But I noted in passing that batting-gloves 'are rejected by many as savouring of effeminacy,' and that 'many well-contested matches have been declared null and void by reason of the measurements being found on subsequent examination to be defective. This was new and curious information. Bowling is the first branch of the art of which the anonymous author treats. After explaining what bowling and popping creases are, he says: 'The bowler in delivering the ball must stand between these two lines.' This was novel doctrine to me: one falls into so many mistakes for want of tuition.

The ball should be grasped 'firmly, yet gently.' The best way to practise bowling 'is to set up a mark and bowl at it until an accurate aim is obtained, as well as a quickness and steadiness of eye wherewith to detect the weak points of the opposing batsman.' How will bowling at a mark teach this? It is disappointing, after a few perfunctory directions, to find beginners merely told to pay 'watchful attention to the best bowlers in their respective localities.' I had not paid a penny to be told that. 'There are many kinds of bowling,' proceeds the *Guide*, '*all of which* should be studied and practised assiduously.'

"We turn to batting. First, it seems, when you go in, you ask the umpire *at your own end* for block. 'This the umpire proceeds to give by measuring a distance rather more than the length of the bat from the middle stump of the wicket, in front of and in a direct line with the latter.' The bat 'should be clutched with both hands by the middle of the handle.' Then comes a very valuable caution to beginners: 'The striker should sedulously guard against the temptation to obtain too many runs. He ought to try to block every ball except

wide and favourable ones.' 'A ball that runs wide of the wicket may be dealt with anyhow.' But I wanted to know which way is best! However, there is good advice as to the batsman's defence. 'Blocking requires great caution.' It is performed by 'chopping with a firm downward cut.' This section contains a description of that deadly ball, the shooter—'shooter, *i.e.* a ball that goes straight for the wicket without touching the ground in front.' This seems to me a very fresh and original definition.

"As to fielding there can be no mistake; the *Guide* gives a diagram of the field (headed 'Cricket Field Arrangements') showing long-off and long-on about thirty yards from the batsman, and the scorers close by one umpire. The diagram has these remarks appended: 'Note.—In fast bowling extend your men. Note.—In slow bowling you draw them nearer to the wicket.' For my slow bowling you have to do just the reverse. The letterpress is scarcely in accord with the plan, for short-slip is told to stand five feet from the wicket-keeper, but is depicted as standing fifteen feet away. The duties of the various fieldsmen are carefully detailed, and here the *Guide* is really useful.

Point's 'province is to watch the order of the bowling and keep a look out for favourable balls.' What he is to do when he sees them is not explained. Cover-point and middle-wicket should 'cross to the side to which the batsman hits most frequently.' Long-leg's duties are even more arduous. He is to stand behind square-leg and to 'support cover-point,' and cover-point is to stand 'adjacent to the border.' When I reached this section, I despaired of ever being a perfect cricketer. It was almost a relief to read that 'there is usually no second innings when one side has in the first been beaten beyond recovery.' I regret that my penny is beyond hope of recovery, too. Now, no one ever regretted the pence he spent in buying Dr. Grace's instructions how to play. There you find sound doctrine clearly expressed: and as all of us want to be taught, this is a great matter. I give you, then, this toast, 'Cricket Teachers, coupled with the name of W. G.'"

The toast was drunk and, for the third time, with musical honours.

It was my turn next; that is the worst of being a senior member of a club. On the field you are an old crock, and can be put in last and

otherwise treated with indignity; but when subscriptions are wanted or speeches, why, you are a senior member and must comply. So I rose and said I wished to propose "The health of Dr. W. G. Grace"; but before doing so, I would take the opportunity of making a personal explanation on the subject of

CATCHES I HAVE MISSED.

Addressing myself to our visitors, I said I might, without injustice to myself, adopt a line of Mr. Norman Gale's—

"I'm not a good cover, I freely admit."

"Indeed," I went on, "the members of my club would not confine the suggestion of my demerits in the field to cover-point. To make a clean breast of the matter, I have missed a good many catches of late years, and, relying on my good nature, they write me down a butter-fingers, without fear of my making a Star Chamber matter of it. It was not always so; I had once as sure a pair of hands as any on the Heath. Twenty, even ten years ago, now, I did not fear comparison. But of late—well, I have made my confession. Still, I admit that when Johnson (who was bowling vilely) used

vituperative language to me last Saturday fortnight because a ball that went yards over my head reached the boundary, I thought it time to vindicate my character. I have, therefore, gone carefully through my notes of recent matches and analysed the causes of my mistakes. For, of course, I don't drop catches wantonly, or without reason. Once in a while, no doubt, I have unaccountably failed to hold the ball; but generally there was some valid explanation to be given, some plain reason why the ball escaped me. No one blames the man who has an August sun full in his eyes; or who trips in the long field over the inequalities which exist in rural grounds, or who is baulked by another man running against him. I have ascertained, I say, to what causes my misses were due, and this is the result:

	per cent.
Sun in my eyes	68.183
Tripped by inequalities when running for the catch	14.763
Tripped owing to lace being undone ...	1.217
Collided with another fieldsman	4
Ball carried out of reach by wind	2.062
Obstructed by batsman ... ..	.666
Extreme cold rendering fingers numb ...	5.684
My fault	3.425

I have not thought it necessary to carry the figures beyond three places of decimals. Round numbers are near enough for me. Now, this is not a very discreditable record. To be sure, I might have divided the three and a-half per cent. which I admit as my fault. I might have attributed the proper proportion to natural disgust at mismanagement of the bowling (I am a change bowler myself and understand how the thing should be arranged), to the derisive and disconcerting cheers of some thoughtless persons, to having my attention distracted by calls by passers-by and so forth. But I disdain such excuses. I would naught extenuate, just as I would let down naught (in the way of catches) in malice. No, I take the blame that is due to me frankly. And, really, it is not a very discreditable record. I made a copy of the table and handed it to Johnson ten days ago. I thought that was the most effective answer to his taunt, the kindest way I could take of reproving him for his remarks on the field.

“Next evening, about nine o'clock, I strolled out from my cottage and walked across the park to the village. About nine o'clock the

special *Standard* comes in, and you can be sure of meeting half our eleven at 'The White Horse.' When I entered there was some laughing at a joke of Johnson's. I soon found what it was: Johnson had made what he called a correct version of my table. It was a vile burlesque. This is how it ran :—

Catches held	...	...	...	3.425 per cent.
Catches missed owing to sun				5.
Catches missed, other causes not				
fieldsman's fault	...	...		10
Catches missed owing to butter				
fingers	...	...	...	81.575

"This was grossly libellous, and I think the other men felt it. Anyhow, we drifted into an argument, and at argument, at any rate, I can hold my own with the rest of our eleven. I reminded them how many years ago at Shalford, on a horribly wet day, when the ball was as slippery as a slide and the ground so bad you could not keep a footing, I brought off a wonderful catch at long on. This I did by the simple artifice of filling my pockets with sawdust, and keeping my hands in them till the ball was dropping, when I clutched and held it, mud and all. That was (though I say it) a really

remarkable effort. Looking back 'through the haze of years,' as our curate puts it in a fine original phrase, I am not sure if it was I, or the other long-field, who made it; but it is a good many years ago, and, at any rate, I have told the story so often that I have a prescriptive right to that catch. We parted in good humour, and Johnson and I walked home together.

"But I little thought then what a signal revenge I should have in our very next match! Last Saturday we played the return game against Albury on their ground. Things pointed to an exciting finish when one of the Albury men had to leave the ground; we wanted about twenty runs, and there was only a quarter of an hour left for play. I had had my innings and offered to take the vacant place in the field. One of our own team laughed, but my offer was accepted. It was getting cold, so I kept my blazer on, and took my place at long off. Two wickets fell and the last man joined Johnson, who was hitting against time. I had had nothing to do till the last over, when only four were wanted to win. Then Johnson gave a huge lift in my direction. I distinctly heard him chuckle as he saw it going towards

me. I ran back fearing I could not get to the ball; but by reaching high and as far back as I could I just got to it, and touched it, but could not hold it. It fell forward and towards my right. I jumped sideways and grabbed it again, shoulder high, and hugged it to my waist, but it slipped again and I thought a good effort had been wasted. But I heard no sound of falling. Looking quietly down, I saw it had lodged in my coat pocket! It was nestling there quite safe, against my pipe. With quiet dignity I took it out and held it aloft to show the catch was made. Then I walked slowly into the pavilion. We had lost the match, but my character was vindicated. Johnson, indeed, attempted to argue that he was not out, and that under rule forty-one he was entitled to five runs, as I had not stopped the ball with 'any part of' my 'person.' But we soon laughed that contention out of court, for by the same reasoning a wicket-keeper stopping the ball with his pads would give five runs to his opponents! No; Johnson was out. He will never call me butter-fingers again!

"You may ask what connection this has with the champion. I will explain. One of the

many wise sayings of his which have been recorded is this: '*We all of us miss catches sometimes!*' This is the tie between great and small cricketers, and I ask you to drink to 'All Lovers of the Game, and W. G.'"

It would be invidious for me to make remarks about the applause received by the various speakers; but I noticed that after my speech there were anxious looks at the clouds. The weather was plainly improving, and perhaps it was a pity to call for another speech. However, the Chairman thought otherwise. We had with us, he said, a distinguished author whom he would ask——

UNWRITTEN CRICKET BOOKS.*

"Gentlemen," said the Author, "my observations shall be short. The literature of cricket, it has often been said, is disappointingly meagre. The publications of the last few years may have lessened the force of this criticism, but there are yet many gaps in shelves that should be full of the game. In *Echoes from the Oxford Magazine* we are told, 'Mr. Page sends a leaflet on "Pulls from the Off."' Where is that

* Reprinted, by permission, from the *St. James's Budget*.

leaflet now? Could not Mr. Page or Mr. W. W. Read expand it into a treatise? The 'pull' is a great subject; perhaps the whole future of cricket might be changed by the appearance of such a book. There is another subject as important: lobs, to wit. It is well known that there is more in lobs than meets the eye. 'Lobs on the Leg-side' is a good title; could not Humphreys devote his leisure to explaining the lobster's art? Moreover, lobs are a portent, and Dr. Grace has taken to them again. When he last bowled lobs (against Kent, in 1876) he followed them up by scoring 344; now that he has tried them again against I Zingari he scores 101, not out. Could not he give us an article explaining the connection between low deliveries and high scoring? For Dr. Grace, indeed, there are fifty subjects awaiting treatment. When are we to have his further reminiscences? True, he has given us one book and several articles already; but a man who has lived through more than a hundred centuries must have much more to tell us. If he would give us 'A Wet Day on the Cricket Field, and How to Enjoy It,' there would be one less unanswered riddle in the world. Another

book, as yet unpublished, would command even wider attention. Every bowler in every shire would secure a copy at any cost. But, if it is written, Dr. Grace has hitherto jealously kept the MS. in his own possession. It is called 'The Ball that Always Gets Me Out.' To know that in a secret drawer in some innermost cupboard lies that undiscovered secret is enough to tempt the bowlers to flat burglary.

"For the 'earnest student' of the game there is a constant provocation in the obscurity which hides its origin and growth. Perhaps, despite the careful harvesting of every discoverable fact, some few stray grains yet await the gleaner in that field of historical research. A year or two devoted to the search of family records, a year or two more of patient digging among forgotten pamphlets, might add ten lines to the story of those early days. Perhaps there is somewhere a mine of knowledge awaiting the discoverer. The next century may see the appearance of *Cricket in the Middle Ages*, by X, Professor of Cricket in the University of Cambridge. Less laborious than that historical monograph will be the *Reflections on Broad Halfpenny Downs*, which we may expect some day

from the pen of 'F. G.' Mr. Cochrane, the only Blue who ever condescended to verse (unless Mr. Yardley, too, should be accounted a poet), has, indeed, already touched on the last theme, and pictured what may happen:—

'When Time of all our flannelled hosts
Leaves only the renown,
Our cracks, perhaps, may join the ghosts
That roam on Windmill Down,
Where shadowy crowds will watch the strife,
And cheer the deeds of wonder
Achieved by giants whom in life
A century kept asunder.'

Mr. Cochrane has also sung of the wretch 'who snicketh the length ball,' but the bowler's woes admit of fuller utterance. A phrase of Mr. Lang's, 'when bats seem broader than the broad barn-door,' suggests a whole volume of lyric melancholy. It would be a graceful thing if our bowlers would found a new Rhymer's Club, and under the title of 'The Barn-door Bat' give expression to the respect they feel for the master. Perhaps Mr. Norman Gale, who has given us such excellent cricket verses, would edit the book and contribute some lines on 'The Yorker that Failed.' There are a

score more of volumes which he may see who lives long enough : *Benefits Forgot*, by a Disappointed Ground Man ; *Cricket Horticulture*, by Flowers and Mold ; *A Short Slip* (a novel in the Keynotes Series) ; *The Average Hater*, by an Old Cricketer ; *Lady Cricketers I have Met*, by I. Zingari ; *Peel on the Spot, with Notes by Roberts*. But just now it is an old book which interests us most ; we are all reading the new edition of *Grace Abounding*. Still we look for more, and in confident expectation of good things to come, I ask you to drink to 'The Literature of Cricket, coupled with the name of W. G.'"

We were able to resume the game then, or I don't know what might have happened. In our second innings I—— But that is of no public importance.



HERE HE IS.



COMING OUT.



COVERING WICKET.



MAKING A BLOCK.



MAKING READY.



READY.



READY FOR ANY BOWLING.



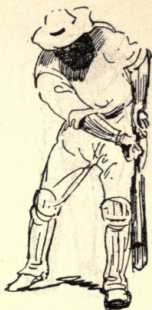
NOW THEN !



PLAYS FORWARD.



LEFT TOE UP.



SCIENCE.



A STOLEN RUN.



A BACK VIEW.



A HIT TO LEG.



A RUN SAVED.



WINDED.



RECOVERING.



CAUTIOUS.



OUT ! LEG BEFORE,
OF COURSE.



FIELDING: A STUDY IN BACKS.



BOWLING: ARRANGING THE FIELD.



THE CHAMPION BOWLS,



BUT NOT THE CHAMPION BOWLER.



FIELDING.



OH !



AH !



HA ! HA !



POINT.



SAVING A RUN.



THE THREE STAGES OF A CATCH.



IMPATIENT.



NOT QUITE.



STOPPED.



WELL FIELDER.



A WAY HE HAS.



HOW'S THAT?



COMING IN AGAIN.



THE BLOCK.



THE TURF.



PATting THE CREASE.

1907-1908



HIS FIRST OVER.

1907-1908



NOT YET I



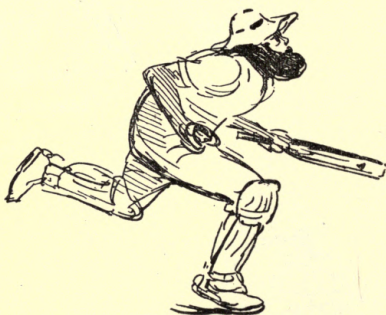
TAKING IT EASY.



CAREFUL.



CUTTING.



A RUN



FOR FOUR,



BLOWN.



WARM WORK,



WARM WORK.



WARM WORK.



IS IT A RUN?



GINGERLY.



NOT FOR W.G.!



A CRACK.



A BLOW.



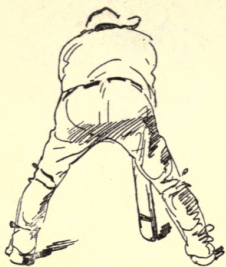
IN FULL BLAST.



IN FULL BLAST.



IN FULL BLAST.



A NASTY ONE.



BLOCK.



TO THE BOUNDARY.



WATCHING IT.



THE USUAL TELEGRAM.



AT REST.



AT REST.



PILING IT UP.



A BIT FAGGED.



HOT, TROUBLE



NOT HIS OVER.



READY FOR A SWIPE.



SAVED !



THAT CREASE AGAIN.



WAITING FOR A
RICHARDSON.



NO ! NO !



LATE

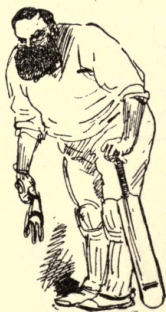
7 *



OUT! 100.



TO THE PAVILION.



THE FINAL BOW.

Inns and Outs ;

Or, a Cricketer's Feelings.

WHEN you wake up in the morning on the day of
“ the great match,”

And rush to the venetians for a peep,
And the rain-flouts flog the windows, and belabour
the soaked thatch,

And the world of leaves with water is a-weep ;
When you think of sodden wickets, and of sawdust
heaps, and steam,

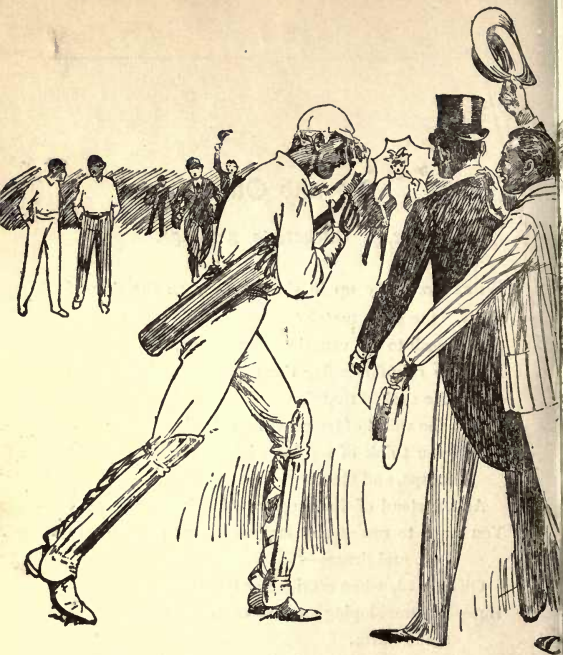
And, instead of donning flannels with a shout,
You want to use strong language, and get back to
bed, and dream—

Oh ! that is when a cricketer feels “ Out ! ”
But when the sloping sunbeams on the verdant turf
shine warm,

And you tread the springing creases *with* a spring,
And the captain's won the toss, and you feel in
rippin' form,

And you're sent in first, to “ slog like anything ” ;
And you find the turf like velvet, and the first ball
goes for six,

And you've early premonitions of a win,



"With cheeks like boiled vermillion



You scoot straight for the Pavilion."

And you seem at peace with Nature, and at home
before the sticks—

Oh! that is when a cricketer feels “In!”

When the Bat who has been banging them two
hours skies one at last

To you, out in the country, straight as straight,
And the sun is in your eyes, and it comes at you as
fast

As a comet or a Highland stream in spate,
Till at the final moment the confounded leather
lingers,

And hits your finger-tips and *not* your palm,
And you feel that all creation is exclaiming “Butter-
fingers!!!”

And that Sol shines on your shame in scornful
calm;

When the smiter all a-melt hitches up his azure belt,
And prepares to smite another score, no doubt;
And the ring seems one round scoff, and your captain
takes you off,

And puts on “Ginger Givembeans,” that lolling,
lobbing toff—

Ah! that is when a cricketer feels “Out!”

But when their last man's in, and wants only two to
win,

And it comes at you hard, sudden, swift, and low,

And the batsman, cool and cocky, begins running,
with a grin,

And you "feel for it" six inches from your toe,
And the field lets out a groan like a pavior's gusty
gasp,

And you *hear* them thinking, "Pity it's old Hicks!"
And the leather hits your palm, feels a Dutch-cheese
in your grasp,

And hurts like bottled thunder-bolts—and *sticks!*
And the cry is, "Chuck her up!" and you're game
to "snap" a Krupp,

And they rush to the Pavilion at full spin,
And your captain, best of fellows, smacks the wind
out of your bellows—

Oh! that is when a cricketer feels "In!"

When you've taken block with care, and assume a
careless air,

As though you didn't hear the ring's applause
(All along of your last score, which they know was
Ninety-four),

And you mean to touch three figures ere you pause;
When the gazers settle down with that cool, con-
siderate frown

Which old stagers always bring to first-class cricket,
When you crack a joke with Brown, who's at point,
and then pat down

An imaginary mountain near your wicket;

When you cast a look around to see how the field are
placed,

And where a sixer safely may be steered,

With that wary, watchful smile which young W. G.
so graced

(When the Champion had a waist and slighter
beard);

When you draw yourself erect, and composedly
expect

The bowler's first delivery—and it *comes*,

With a break like a frog's jump, and uproots your
middle stump,

And the ring with disappointment fairly hums;

When you plod to the Pavilion with that plaguey
dismal "duck,"

And e'en your private pals can't raise a shout,

And one whispers, "Don't be stuck! It is only
cricket-luck!"

Jove! that is when a cricketer feels "Out!"

But when, though put in first, and though hot and
parched with thirst,

You are in with the last man, a perfect flat,

And you've made your "century" clean, plus an
extra seventeen,

And you spy a chance of "carrying your bat;"

When the final over's yours, and you bag a brace of
fours,

And follow with a three, a two, or five,
And feel that you could stand with the willow in your
hand

A fortnight, and still keep the game alive;
When "How's that?" the fielders shout, and the
umpire jerks forth "Out!"

And you feel, with a big thrill, it isn't *you*,
But that you will live in story as the man who had
the glory

Of carrying your bat *that* innings through;
When with cheeks like boiled vermillion you scoot
straight for the Pavilion,

But are quickly intercepted by the crowd,
And they kick up a big row till you saunter out and
bow,

And your sweetheart's sitting by and looking
proud;

And your captain tells you that you are quite the
Coming Bat,

And that the Club must thank you for a win,
And you find that your full score is precisely One
Three Four!

Gad! *that* is when a cricketer feels "In!"

In! In!

Yes, that is when a cricketer feels "In!"

The Game of Cricket-match.

MASTERS THE EDITORS,—My distinguished countryman, Max O'Rell, has represented the manners of the English people, their religion, their politic, &c., and truly their games; but his relation of the game of cricket-match—bah! it is silhouette! Perhaps he understand it not, possibly. My faith! it is difficult.

Look then! Myself, I shall essay it, its follies, its savagery—*bêtises*. I have a friend—English, you say? You have reason.

My friend say, “Come then, we have a cricket-match, you shall see.”

I reply, “It is just—good. I come—but at what hour?”

“The wickets,” say my friend, “will be pitched at eleven hours.”

“How then! pitched! It is horrible. They shall be black and glutinous! and, pah! they shall smell!”

He put himself to laugh.

"No, no, Monsieur, not as that ! They will be pitched, placed in small holes."

"*Bien !*" say I, "but, my faith ! it shall be difficult."

We are arrived, the wickets have pitched themselves, they stand. Messieurs the players are in the field, in disorder, everywhere ; they are far, they are near, they stand together, apart—all over the shop, as my friend say. In face of the wicket a man with a bat—behind, a man with gloves. My faith ! what gloves—horrible !

"Tell then," say I, "what is it that the man with the bat is ?"

"He defends the wicket."

"And the other with the gloves ?"

"He is the wicket-keeper."

"Ah ! good ! they shall assist themselves. The wicket is safe, is it not ?"

"Not exactly," say he in laughing ; "but look, they commence."

Truly Monsieur "the bowler" launch a ball with all his force at the wicket ; the poor man with the bat hardly escape, but the good "wicket-keeper" arrest the ball, he hold it in

his gloves. *Courage! mes deux amis*, your wicket is safe! Five times the ball fly, but the two friends are alert—one time the bat, one time the gloves; the ball is stopped always.

"Regard then," I say, "these men walk themselves upon the field, their hands are in their pockets. What is it, then, that it is?"

"It is over," say my friend.

"How then over? My faith! but it is short. It is a game very dangerous. Let us go!"

"Stay," say he; "it is but a phrase. See, they commence again."

Again the ball fly; but the one with the bat is angry, he strike the villain ball. The ball roll precipitately, the one with the bat run, they all run. He, the batman, cannot find his wicket; he run to and fro, he is in despair. But the good wicket-keeper hold out his arms, his friend rush into them, the ball arrive too late, they embrace, the spectators applaud. *Courage!* Again the wicket is safe.

But now, again the ball is come; the bat is raised, but, alas! the ball turns itself, the bat touches it not—the good wicket-keeper dreams,

perhaps,—the ball escapes, the wicket falls to the earth, the batsman walk slowly away, the chin on his breast: he is sad, perhaps. I ask my friend what he has, the batsman? He say, "He is bold." It is possible, but he do not look so.

The wicket-keeper has another friend; together they protect their wicket; but, alas for human nature! one time the ball come slow, slow; the batsman advance, he strike with precipitation, he missed, and the perfidious wicket-keeper catch the ball, and dash it into his friend's wicket. Traitor! *sacré nom de bomb!* he is bribed by the enemy, he is a *scélérat!* Bah! it is nothing! It is these English! How they are droll! They applaud it; it is a *plaisanterie!*

*

*

*

My friend explique the game; he say:

"See then, that little man, long distant? He is long-leg."

"For why," I ask, "he is long-leg, himself so short?"

"Because he throw so well the ball," say he.

"My faith!" respond I, "he not throw the ball with his leg; he should be long-arm."

But he only laugh at me. Another batman, he stand firm; he is big, heavy, solid. The ball fly, he run, he pant, he perspire, he run again—no! he has forgotten something! He go back! He is too late, the ball is there also, his wicket is broken; it is evident that he suspect the wicket-keeper, but he has not seen him, he dares not to accuse him: he, too, place the chin on the breast, he depart. The evil wicket-keeper smile; but his time is short. The bowler has seen him; he knows his treachery: he aim the ball, perhaps at the wicket, who knows? It bump upon the earth, it hit the perfidious wicket-keeper on the nose, the red blood drip. The bowler rub his hands with sawdust, as a proof of his gratification. It is well!

Again another batman. He is cunning; he protect the wicket with more than his bat—with what then? With his leg. The arbiter declares him guilty. He forbid the leg in front. He give judgment; he say "On one side, or behind, yes—but in front, no!" He go.

Now the ball pass the batman, elude the

keeper, and roll on with velocity amazing. The batman run, one time and again; the people say "Hurrah!"

A man in the crowd laugh, "By Jove, that's a sell!"

I ask my friend, "What then? tell me!" And he reply, "That was a buy."

"How then," say I, "Monsieur here call it a sell; you say it is a buy,—which have reason? You cannot, perhaps, be right the both."

But again he only laugh, and mock himself of me in saying, "Whichever you like, my little dear; you pay your money (two franc fifty at the entrance) and you take your choice!"

But it is enough. The cricket-match is a game barbarian: you run, you perspire, you are *en dishabille*; the ball is hard, you drop it and they execrate you, it hurts you and they laugh, you avoid it and are disgraced, you confront it and are crippled for ever. It is a game for savages. It has no tactic, no calculation, no imagination. *Ma foi!* Regard the dominoes. *Voilà!* a game in verity. Who are the people most polished of all?—The French people. Who are the people most rude of all?

—The English people. The French people play dominoes. The English people play cricket-match. *Voilà tout !*

Agréé Messieurs, &c., &c.,

LA GRANDE NATION.

[From "THE CLIFTONIAN," by permission of the Editors ;
reprinted from "AMATEUR SPORT."]

A Batsman's Day.

BY A BOWLER.

OH! the noon is flaming high, and the sun is
broiling hot,

It is frizzling up the bulb of the glittering ther-
mometer.

Around the long ellipse there is not a vacant spot,
And they're swarming on the top of that thunder-
ing gasometer;

An iron Coliseum newly painted creamy white,
Where the gazers seem to stick like the flies on a
flypaper;

And the roof of the Pavilion o'er the clock-face is
packed tight,

And Briggs is far too hot to cut a caper.

The flopping felt and cabbage-leaf destroy the
county trim,

And straws are donned by men they are mostly
held in scorn by;

And something of a cover, with cool crown and a
broad brim,

Would tempt a brawny Brockwell, or seduce a
sturdy Hornby.

And Abel between wickets looks a mushroom on the
shift,

And the sultriness slugs Maurice, who can like a
scooting cat field,

And the most teetotal fieldsman to his lips now longs
to lift

A humming beaded bumper of Iced Hatfield.

And the score is running up as the rays are running
down,

"Old Grace" is at one wicket, and "young
Stoddart" at the other;

And they both have got their eyes in, and the
bowlers are done brown.

Grace has hit ten fours already, and, by Jove,
there goes another!

Yes, an effort *might* have stopped it some six inches
from the ring,

But the turf's like torrid stubble, and e'en fleetest
field goes floundery;

And Mold has little "devil," and young Richardson
no sting,

And Stoddart spansks *another* to the boundary.



What's the use of steady pounding when you can't
get any break on,

And the pitch is like a lawn, and the ball's a red-hot
bullet;

And the feel of one's poor soles is like frizzling eggs-
and-bacon,

When one's mouth seems full of sawdust, and
sandpaper lines one's gullet?

And there goes a spanking sixer o'er the palings!
Oh, it's nice

To see a middle-stumper put away in that cool
fashion!

And I yearn, like Patrick Dooley, for "a nightcap
full of ice,"

And the Umpire looks upon me with compassion.

And the Champion grasps his bat, and he plainly
likes the feel

Of the thrill through his tense muscles, as he nicks
that nice half-volley;

Ah! to stand upon good wickets with clear glance
and nerves of steel,

And to plank 'em to the palings every time is truly
jolly.

And, great Felix! how he crumps 'em, and, great
Pilch, how well he "places!"

Oh! volley 'em to Vauxhall, if you like, while you're
about it!

And the ring goes fairly rabid, for a "century" of
Grace's

Sends 'em clean slap off their chumps, sir, divil
doubt it!

Whoof! We've parted them at last. *That's* a mercy!
What? the score?

Two-seven-two between 'em! Well, that's tidy
for one wicket.

A rot? Lor' bless ye, no, sir! Why, the very tail
will score

This match, I'll bet a bat-case. Oh! a "bats-
man's day" at cricket

Means a lot of leather-hunting. There you are! I
told you so!

Walter Read shapes to 'em quickly! *Caught!* A
miss? Oh, butter fingers!!!

But, there, why should I blame him? It was ever
even so;

On the Bat's day the Ball *always* lags and
lingers.

How he grins at the let-off, takes fresh middle, and
lets fly!

Aye, bang against the scoring-box! That's four-
teen in one over!

Wish you'd sky a chance my way, sir, and just let
me have a try!

Ah! no such luck. Three through the slips.

That's fifty. *He's* in clover!

Ough! It's hot. But, lord! I like it. It's the game, lads, after all.

Eh! *I'm* going on to bowl? Well, I *hope* I'll get a wicket.

But whether Ball beats Bat, my boys, or whether Bat beats Ball,

It's still the same old Glorious Game of Cricket!

Cricket on the Ice.

IN Sussex, at Sheffield Park (which by its very name suggests all kinds of sharp weather and cutting winds), they have been playing cricket on the ice. Several county players took part, and the runs seem to have been executed principally on the players' left ears and right elbows. No batsman was allowed to make more than twice ten, and the thermometer obeyed the same rule, and stayed at 20, or below it, right through the match.—*Lika Foko*, February 16th, 1895.





A Remonstrance.

"Cricket, which is a most healthy and educative, though excessively tedious, game."—*The Spectator*, March 9, 1895.

Excessively tedious, Grandmother, dear ?

O SPEC., but you ought to know better than that !
The king of games tedious ! Nay, but it's clear
You've done very little with ball or with bat.

Excessively tedious ! Ah, had you felt
The bat in your hand leap to get at the ball,
Or had you e'er stolen a short run full pelt,
You ne'er would have uttered such nonsense at all.

Excessively tedious ! Then without doubt
You ne'er lifted ball to the ropes at square leg,
Or smacked a full pitcher, or threw a man out,
Or clean bowled a dangerous Slog for an egg,

Or fearfully waited a skier to catch,
And thrilled when it homed in your hand like a bird,
Or snatched from the fire all unaided the match.—
Excessively tedious! SPEC., you're absurd.

Get into the cricket-field, Grandmother mine,
With the grass at your feet and the sun over head,
Till the joy of the "tedium" stirs you like wine;
And then to your knees, and repent what you've said!

The Old Bowler.

LAUDATOR TEMPORIS ACTI.

"We are bored to death by old, and not very old, cricketers, with the constant remark that there is no bowling nowadays, a very loose style of batting, no fielding—in fact, *nothing* like it was twenty years ago. Can we deny it? Or is it the tendency of the veteran to cling to the memories of their happy past? . . . We are satisfied that for one good bowler of former days there are now twenty decent ones."—*Jerks In from Short Leg.*

OLD BOWLER, *acting as Umpire, loquitur* :—

"How's that?" *Out*, of course! Not one time in a million
That stroke is brought off by a modern-style bat!
Eugh! What a shout! The whole blessed Pavilion
Rises at him, as he clutches his hat
And bolts at the double the last twenty paces!
Yell away, gents! In the sturdy old days,
When the jolly old boys played in tall hats *and* braces,
They wouldn't have been quite so free with their praise.

Hundred and thirty! Ah! looks very slashing,
And runs up his "average" nicely, no doubt;
But one of my curly ones, breaking and crashing
Bang on to his middle, would soon put *him* out.
He wouldn't have run up no "century," neither,
In old "Lumpsy's" time, no, nor even in *mine*.
Why, give me "my day" and a bit o' soft weather,
And he wouldn't "hit" me, not one ball in nine!

Billiard-board wickets, and boundaries easy,
 Bowling for babies, and who *couldn't* score?
We ran 'em out, and *our* trundling was teasey.
 Look! there's a snick to the seats! Easy four!
 Clap it, ye Cockneys! You love a free hitter;
 "And, 'igh and horfen" 's your style. It's a lark!
 Slogger looks all cock-a-whoop and a twitter.
What would he do with an over from Clarke?

Whoof! my old fingers are all on the fidget!
 Twig *his* weak spot, and could soon stick *him* up!
 Bowler, a left-handed, bandy-legged midget,
 Runs like a sprinter and slings like a Krupp!
 Leg-bye for four! Ah, just what I expected!
 Gives "Mr. Extras" a lift up, that do.
What? crowd cheers *that!* Lor'! I feel quite dejected:
 What *is* the glorious old game coming to?

Here I must stand in my flapping brown holland,
 Shiv'ring while fluky ones slop up the score.
 Look! There's a toff with his two-barrelled Dollond
 Watching the bowling. The *bowling!* O lor'!!!
 Pilch—or old Ben would have slogged it to 'Ades.
Cricket? It's easy as trap-bat-and-ball.
Game? It's a picnic, with loungers and ladies;
 What they've left out is *the Cricket*—that's all!



"Here I must stand in my flapping
brown holland."

Yes; change the bowling, my Captain! 'Tis time to!—

Lawks! there's a *leetle* more devil in *that*!

Very nice length, and came off the pitch prime, too!—

Got him in once!—Now the ball beats the bat,

Just as it ought to do!—Hillo! A collar!

Put that away through the slips pretty clean!

He'll make a batsman yet, I'll bet a dollar.

Nattier cut, now, I've not often seen.

Places 'em, too! Dodged the cover-point sweetly,

What W. G. used to do, with his grin.

Recollect how I sold Willsher completely;

Me last man in, too, and fourteen to win.

Got 'em, too!—Ginger!!! That youngster can shift 'em!

On to the roof! Ah, my boy, have a care.

Proper to play Slogger Thornton, and lift 'em,

But *don't you leave 'em too long in the air*!

* * * * *

“How's that?” *Not out*! But as near as no matter!

Pish! that's a pretty drive! Run, youngster, run!!

Five!!! Now, again! Ah! that ominous clatter!—

Just as he seemed warming up to the fun!

Thirty 'gainst trundling—that's smart! Not so dusty!

Though I *could* teach him—Yah! shut up! For shame!

I'm just a bilious old Bowler gone crusty.

Well, well, hooray for the Glorious Old Game!

To "Stoddart's Lot" in the South.

BY AN OLD CROCK.

It was pretty hard to pick them—batsmen, bowlers,
England's best
(If you doubt it, read Fitzgerald's roystering *Wickets
in the West*):

One may wager smiteful Stoddart oft-times felt "down
in the mouth"

Ere he'd safely shipped his wanderers, bound for
Wickets in the South.

Now he's jolly as a collie who has driven flock to
fold,

Middlesex's pride can't murmur when at last his team
is told.

Surely Ford the "gentle tapper," Philipson the
Oxford crack,

Nimble Gay and brave Maclaren, Captain Stoddy
well will back

On Australia's sunny wickets, where a sixer goes for
six,

And they seldom want the sawdust-mountain hard
against the sticks.

After such a sloppy season, batsmen well may cry
"Hurroo

For the land of broiling pitches and the bounding
kangaroo!"

Brockwell's hits should go one better than the big
marsupial,

Richardson on Cornstalk sticks should play blue
bungo with the ball.

Let her rip, O star of Surrey! rain them (like Lord
Surrey's host)

On Australia's middle stump, or victory and England's
lost!

Lam them in, illustrious Lockwood! Surrey's host
ye three compose,

When ye three mean business Stoddart well may
smile upon his foes.

Lancashire "Boy Briggs" has furnished, likewise
Albert, mighty bat!

Keep "Ward" o'er those "ashes," Albert! Johnny,
lay their timbers flat!

Good Sir Bobby—Peel of Yorkshire, prove York's
wanted, but not *wanting*!

Brown—your fellow Tyke—should test their trundlers,
keep their fieldsmen panting.

Sussex sends sly, ancient Humphreys, and the fastest
of our foes

May exclaim, "The Tortoise wins!" when tested
with his artful slows.



"A CORN
"STALK
IN THE
FIELD

'Tis a spanking team, my Stoddart, but you'll want
them ere you're through;

For they've corkers in the country of the bounding
kangaroo.

You—centurion undaunted—you must make some
hundreds more—

England hopes they may be many—Ford must flog
and Brocky score,

Young Maclaren prove not barren, Ward and Brown
sublimely smite,

All your bowlers do their utmost, if you mean to win
the fight.

Thoughts of Caffyn, Grace, and Shrewsbury crowd
amain on this old crock:

Eagerly he'll watch you fighting right away from
earliest block.

W. G. can't wag his raven beard above the wickets
now;

Years touch even that with silver. But he'll watch
your course, I vow;

And our modern match of stalwart "kind and manly
Alfred Mynn,"

Wishing he were there, will wish you all fair field
and many a win.

Now you're at it! Thoughts fly o'er the ocean that
between us dashes,

'Twere "too previous," yet too stale, to raise a dust
about those "ashes,"

But you'll see some ancient foemen, and new foemen
not a few ;

Like Ulysses, you will meet the great Achilles whom
you knew,—

Pelides is a slashing bat!—Well, may you give it to
them hot !

From the old home across the foam, here's health
and luck to Stoddart's Lot !





I say "Old Man"
"Who's got those Ashes?"

At the Eton and Harrow Match.

[SCENE.—*Lord's Cricket Ground on the day of the match. Coaches and carriages occupy every available space around the stands. The air is redolent of smart toilettes and salmon mayonnaise. A large and fashionably dressed crowd is perambulating the ground. The rival colours are everywhere in evidence. The ladies, thinking of their complexions, chiefly affect the light blue; the gentlemen, finding it easily procurable, for the most part wear a dark blue cornflower. The second bell has rung, but the people exhibit no inclination to resume their seats.*]

CHORUS OF CONSTABLES. *Parss off the ground, please! Parss off the ground!*

FUSSY MATRON (*taking a seat in the front row on reserved stands—to her three daughters*). I think, dears, this will do. There will be no one in front of us, so we shall see excellently. It is

so much nicer to have the unnumbered tickets. One can sit where one likes.

ELEGANT LADY IN PINCE-NEZ (*coming up*). I fear there must be some mistake. (*Glancing at the seats on either side.*) My tickets are numbered six-four-eight and six-four-nine. They should, I think——

FUSSY MATRON (*rising*). Oh, we don't mind in the least giving them up if you wish it. Pray don't hesitate to take them. There are so *many* more. Not at all, not at all. Come along, dears.

ELEGANT LADY (*to herself*). Common!

FUSSY MATRON (*to herself*). Stuck-up old fright!

IMPORTANT YOUTH ON THE HARROW STAND. I regard this match, Stewart, as distinctly safe. Their great man was making an elaborate ass of himself at the nets.

OBSEQUIOUS YOUTH. What a fellow you are, Clyne! You get to the bottom of a thing at once.

IMPORTANT YOUTH. In this case it was scarcely difficult. That pro. was sending him down some of the most insipid stuff I ever saw—quite harmless to a child. Well, you saw what he did with it?

OBSEQUIOUS ADMIRER (*afraid of committing himself*). Who could help?

IMPORTANT YOUTH. He was most evidently stuck up all the time, and eventually played all round one and was bowled. A deplorable exhibition!

OBSEQUIOUS ADMIRER (*tentatively*). Still, our man Willford was bowled once.

IMPORTANT YOUTH. Ah, but it *came*. Didn't you see that? It *came* a lot.

OBSEQUIOUS ADMIRER. You notice everything, Clyne. What a wonderful fellow you are!

IMPORTANT YOUTH. Practice, my dear boy, practice. Ah, here they are!

(The field has been cleared, and eleven young gentlemen in white flannels emerge from the Pavilion, endeavouring to look as though they were used to it. A burst of cheering from one portion of the ground greets their appearance, which is renewed from another quarter a moment later, when the batsmen emerge, and the game is started.)

GENTLEMAN WITH BUNDLE OF PAPERS UNDER HIS ARM (*appearing among the crowd in the public seats and removing his hat*). Ladies and gentlemen, this is no time or place for conversation, so I'll

just serve you as quickly as I can before I go amongst the public. (*Puts his hat on, and, after sorting his papers, removes it again.*) Gentlemen, my sympathies in this match are with Eton—and Harrow. (*Some laughter.*) Good old Eton—and Harrow! (*Again dons his hat, takes a few steps among the crowd, and once more removes it.*) Ladies and gentlemen, you are all come 'ere to see the match, and I'll say no more than this: When I go to the Oval I expect to see an enthusiastic crowd, and I see it; when I go to Sheffield I expect to see a mob, and I see it; when I come to Lord's I expect to see an *intelligent* crowd (*impressively*), and I see it. (*Laughter and some applause.*) Gentlemen, I 'ave 'ere the welcome 'ome to our lads from Australia; (*raising his voice*) welcome 'ome to our champions from Australia—reference to the successes and reverses of the recent tour. The sketch of Dr. W. G. Grace, life of our champion and record of his scores. Ladies and gentlemen, Dr. Grace is forty-seven years of age, and 'as just completed his hundredth century. Gentlemen, this 'as never before been equalled in the history of the game. The new rhyme on the so-called lady footballers—ladies

who 'ave forgot their sex. The three of them one penny, sir. (*He takes his wares amongst the crowd and is rewarded for his oratory by a brisk sale.*)

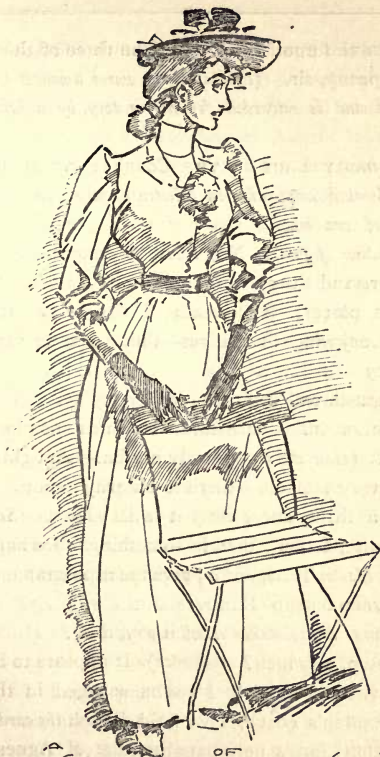
AMIALE LADY IN THE COVERED STAND (*to middle-aged companion in heliotrope, who wears the look of one who is weary of warring against an expanding figure*). No, dear, I cannot say I understand the game. But one has to come to these places. And, really, I like to see the boys enjoying themselves—they seem so very happy.

COMPANION. I find it rather trying. They make so little provision for one's comfort. These seats are too terribly hard and straight.

AMIALE LADY. They are cheering again. I *should* like to know what it is all about. (*Sees a card boy.*) Oh, here is something! Perhaps this will help us. Boy, give me a programme. (*She takes a card.*)

COMPANION. What does it say, dear?

AMIALE LADY (*disappointed*). It appears to be merely a list of the persons engaged in the game. How very stupid! (*She discards the card.*) I wonder what can have become of Agnes? She went away with Mr. Campbell quite early



A GOOD JUDGE OF CRICKET(ERS)

to see the tennis. I think tennis must be a very interesting game.

AGNES (*coming up with a young man, and looking somewhat abashed, but endeavouring not to show it*). Oh, *here* you are! We couldn't think where you had gone. We have been looking for you *all* the morning.

AMIABLE LADY. We have not moved, dear. Did you like the tennis?

AGNES (*slightly confused*). The tennis? Oh, yes, very much! It is *such* a nice game.

AMIABLE LADY. I knew it must be. Mr. Campbell, will you take *me*?

CAMPBELL. Charmed, Mrs. Merton, I am sure. (*Hesitating.*) Just at present—that is, at this very moment—there is no play going on; but a little later, if you will give me the pleasure, I don't doubt——. (*Stops as he meets Mrs. Merton's eyes, and a painful pause ensues.*)

OVERDRESSED DANDY BEHIND THE STANDS (*meeting acquaintance similarly attired*). Hullo, Jephson, any luck?

JEPHSON. Luck! I've hung round Lady Broughton's coach, I've paid compliments to old Bottleford's ugly daughters, I've jabbered for a quarter of an hour to that hideous Mrs.

Camberwell, and not a solitary invitation. They'll talk by the yard, every one of them, but not a word about lunch. It's outrageous!

OVERDRESSED DANDY. My experience has been similar. People and their lunch baskets are like misers and their gold chests. What's to be done?

JEPHSON. I heard someone saying just now that it's possible to get lunch here by paying for it.

OVERDRESSED DANDY. My *dear* Jephson!

(One of the players has his wickets scattered. The schoolfellows of the bowler are exuberant, those of the batsman correspondingly downcast.)

CHORUS OF THE FORMER. Well b-o-w-l-e-d, b-o-w-l-e-d, b-o-w-l-e-d!

MOTHER OF ONE OF THE DOWNCAST ONES (*to TOMMY, who is sitting before her on a coach, talking to a companion*). What is all this noise about, Tommy?

TOMMY. One of our fellows has been bowled, that's all. They needn't make such a row about it; he's a jolly rotten bat. Wait till Eves comes in!

MOTHER. Who's Eves, dear?

TOMMY. Eves is the captain. *He* knows how

to bat. I shouldn't be surprised if he fetched one over the Pavilion.

MOTHER. Oh, he's coming back! Tommy dear, he wasn't out; he's coming back.

TOMMY. No, this is another fellow. Oh, I say, Trevor (*to his companion*), here's Eves!

(*The batsman takes his place at the wicket, and, after playing a few balls, hits one to the boundary.*)

TOMMY. By Jove, that was a fine drive! It's quite on the cards he'll get that hundred quid. You know, they give a man a hundred quid if he breaks the clock.

TREVOR. Yes, *I* heard that. Is it true?

TOMMY. True? Rather! I knew a man who got it. By Jove, there's another! W-e-l-l hit! I say, Mother, Eves is playing finely, isn't he?

MOTHER. He seems to be hitting the ball about. I'm rather afraid he'll send one here.

TOMMY. Afraid! I wish he would. He could do, well enough. He's a splendid fellow, Eves. He's one of the best fellows I know.

MOTHER. You'd better ask him to come and stay with us, dear, if he's so nice.

TOMMY. Come and stay with *us*! Catch him at it. You won't find Eves coming to stay with *us*. Why, they'll make him a member of the

M.C.C. if he gets his century. What's that? Out? Leg before? Oh, what a *beastly* swindle!

MOTHER. What is the matter, Tommy? Why are you angry?

TOMMY. Anybody would be mad. Those fellows bring down a fool of an umpire who doesn't know a bat from a spring chicken, and he swindles all our men out.

MOTHER. If they really do that, it is a great injustice. I'll get your father to write to the head-master.

TOMMY. On, no; I shouldn't bother. Here's Mason. It's not much good him coming in; they'll probably give him out for playing the ball.

MOTHER (*who has been carefully surveying the field*). Tommy, I don't think you can win, can you?

TOMMY. Win! Do you hear that, Trevor? The mater doesn't think we can *win*. Just you wait and see. We shall give them the finest thrashing they've ever had in their lives.

MOTHER. Well, you know better than I do, but it seems rather unfair to me. I can only see two of your side, and there are ever so many of the others. There! That's just what

I said! They're beaten, Tommy. They're all going in. Don't go and fight, darling. Remember your new top hat.

TOMMY. No, it's all right; it's only lunch-time. Come on, Trevor; let's go and have a look at the pitch.

Robinson's Off-Break.

I SUPPOSE there was no more popular cricketer in all Surrey than Jack Robinson. From Halesmere to Croydon, from Redhill to Virginia Water, everyone knew him, and he had played on every green and heath in the county. He seemed to have nothing to do but play cricket, and though he never appeared at the Oval, he had dealt out destruction to the batsman everywhere else. He was a plucky, hard-hitting batsman and a good field anywhere, but his most notable quality was his off-break. His balls would whip back a yard at top pace, and on his day no one could stand against him; he had brought victory to the Farley Green Club more times than we, as old rivals of the Farley Green men, cared to remember. Yet he was so good a fellow, that a batsman after his third duck's egg bore no malice. You can imagine the dismay at Farley Green, and the

mixture of congratulations and regret in our village, when we heard that Robinson had accepted some business appointment in a cricketless settlement in the South Seas.

I said good-bye to him one January day; it was less than two months afterwards that we heard that his ship had gone down with all hands. That, everyone said, was a wretched end for so good a cricketer; it was a miserable business. But we little thought how far off the end really was, or how much trouble that off-break was yet to cause us!

It was when Robinson's will became known that the excitement began. The news of his death was so well authenticated that the Court at once "presumed" his death, and his relatives were about to obtain probate. His bats and bags and other cricket materials he had left amongst those of us who had known him best. His belongings of greater pecuniary value were given to various relatives. But the clause in the will which concerned us most was this:—

"And I give and bequeath my off-break, together with my pace, pitch, and all other things necessary to the full use and enjoy-

ment of the said off-break, to my friend John Robinson Brown of Wonersh, in the county of Surrey, free of duty. And I express the wish (but so that no precatory or other trust is to be implied in respect of the bequest hereby made) that he will make use of the said off-break for the benefit of the Farley Green Cricket Club, of which we are both members."

Now, this we strongly objected to. We were deeply sorry Robinson was gone, but we didn't see why, as he was gone, his off-break should remain to injure us. Still, we felt it would be ungracious to dispute the will, and so far as we were concerned, Brown might have enjoyed his legacy unquestioned.

But the Godalming men thought otherwise. They entered a *caveat*, and a suit was commenced in the Probate Court to establish the will.

The first difficulty was to determine what was to be done with the off-break and the rest of the estate while the suit was pending. The writ was issued in March, and clearly the case could not come on for trial till after the Long Vacation. The whole cricket season would be gone before a decision could be obtained, for these legal umpires in black gowns take longer

to make up their minds than our umpires in white coats do. Clearly, poor Robinson's estate must be managed by some one meanwhile. So the plaintiff applied to the Court to appoint a Receiver. At first, the Godalming men meant to oppose the application; but in the Court (I went down out of curiosity to hear the application made) I happened to meet Harvey, the Godalming captain, and a few minutes' conversation quite altered the defendants' tactics. When the motion was reached, the counsel for the Godalming men said he quite agreed that an administrator *pendente lite* must be appointed; the only question was, who was the most proper person for the post? He suggested Mr. Wilson, of Farley Green, one of the plaintiffs, to whom the defendants felt there could be no objection.

The plaintiffs' counsel, not seeing through this sudden change of front, accepted the suggestion. I don't think Wilson, who was the crack batsman of Farley Green, realised the awful consequences of that appointment. He was a really good batsman, as all our bowlers knew from sad experience, until he was appointed by the Court. This order was made in May, and Wilson had just started the

season with a not-out innings of sixty when he was thus appointed Administrator *pendente lite* and Receiver of the Off-break. After that, for two months, in fourteen matches and seventeen innings, Wilson did not make ten runs! His luck was lamentable. The most ordinary bowler could get him out. Plain-looking balls whipped back from the off and beat him; a man who had never been known to break a ball an inch could, when bowling to Wilson, make the ball come back a yard! Farley Green did not win a match, for Wilson's failure and the loss of Robinson demoralised the rest. Wilson got so accustomed to balls coming in from the off that he tried standing in front of his wicket, and was always leg-before. He tried to pull, but that stroke was foreign to his correct style. He hit out wildly, and skied the ball on the off every time. At last he realised the spell that was on him: he was Receiver of the Off-break. All the damage that Robinson used to do was now done to him! Once he had realised this, he acted promptly, and in a week he had resigned his post.

The question was then, What was to be done? No one would accept the appointment. Wilson's

ill-luck and the explanation of it had become known throughout the county, and no one else was willing to risk a similar experience. Eventually the judge ordered the off-break to be deposited in Court, with the title-deeds to the other property, and there it remained till the trial. At least, it was supposed to remain there; but I heard tales of the wonderful bowling performances of a member of the Civil Service C.C., who had not hitherto been distinguished. I inquired, and found he was a clerk in the principal Probate Registry, and I thought I understood what had happened. No dust would have accumulated on Robinson's disputed bequest. However, that was no affair of mine. What I could not understand was the failure of some Farley Green *bowler* to accept the vacant Receivership. Of course, neither Wilson nor any other batsman should have accepted the office, but a bowler could have made good use of the break. But it was not for me to suggest this; our return match with Farley Green was coming on, and I did not want Robinson's ghost to spoil our averages.

The case came on for trial in November.

Farley Green had not had so bad a season for twenty years, and I don't think even Brown, the legatee, looked forward with much pleasure to the result. But I am bound to admit that the defence the Godalming men set up was shabby. They alleged that the will had been obtained by the "undue influence" which Brown exercised over poor Robinson.

"What, in your own words, was the nature of the influence exercised over Mr. Robinson?" asked the plaintiff's counsel.

"It was twofold," said Harvey. "Mr. Brown was umpiring once or twice when Robinson, the testator, was bowling, and I used to think his decisions favoured the bowler."

"In what way?"

"Well, he has given me leg-before to a ball that pitched outside the stumps."

"You were out leg-before-wicket, then?"

"Yes."

"And you were not satisfied?"

"I think I was not out."

"Mr. Harvey, tell me this: Did you ever think you *were* out in that way?"

Poor Harvey, being on oath, of course had to admit he never did think so.

"Now, can you tell me the name of any man who ever was satisfied in such circumstances?"

Harvey thought he could; but it turned out that he only knew of a man who had admitted he was out, after the umpire had decided in his favour, and he made a lot of runs subsequently.

His lordship looked at the jury and smiled.

"Now tell me, Mr. Harvey, what were the other means by which you say undue influence was exerted?"

"I think it is shown in the desire expressed that the off-break should be used for the Farley Club. Poor Robinson used to belong to a lot of clubs; he often played for us at Godalming. And I never noticed that he himself kept his break for the Farley Club only."

"But he was a leading member of the Farley Green C.C.?"

"Yes."

"And specially interested in its fortunes?"

"Possibly."

After that, of course, there was nothing more to be said. The jury found for the plaintiff without retiring, and the Court pronounced in favour of the will. But the season

was over, and Farley Green had not had much benefit from the legacy.

Next season, of course, we expected them to take their revenge. But for a time things went worse than ever. And Brown! poor Brown! I was really sorry for him. That wretched legacy ruined his average. Brown was a left-handed bowler with a curl from the leg; Robinson had been a right-handed bowler, and the two breaks never amalgamated. Whether the break had been allowed to get damp in Court after the season was over, or whatever the cause, it never seemed to work properly in Brown's hands. If he pitched to the off, the off-break was absent and his own curl from leg made the ball a wide. If he pitched to leg, intending the ball to come in round the batsman's legs, then Robinson's off-break unexpectedly acted, and the batsman got a safe and easy boundary. We used to chaff Brown and advise him to get the break repaired. But the poor fellow was so depressed about it that we soon ceased to talk in this way, and at the end of June he had almost decided to give up bowling.

Then a strange thing happened. We were

playing the Peaslake men on our Heath, when a bronzed stranger was noticed peeping from behind the tent. He had tattoo marks on his face and hands, and he had grown a beard. Otherwise he was unchanged: for, of course, it was Robinson. He had a wonderful tale to tell of shipwrecks and adventures, Malays and missionaries; but that, as has been remarked, is another story. The great thing was, Here was Robinson back again, and I was using his favourite bat; and Johnson, for old acquaintance' sake, had put on Robinson's pads and his off-break . . .

That unlucky off-break! Here we were in June, and Robinson was thirsting for a game. And, of course, as he was not dead, he wanted his off-break and his other belongings back again. But it took him seven months to satisfy the Court that he was entitled to have them. By that time the off-break had become quite useless. So he has gone in for batting, and makes ten times as many runs as he used to do; but his bowling is quite gone. And the most annoying thing is, that he had to pay £87 legacy duty to get that off-break back from Brown!

The Old Age of Cricketers.

THERE is a popular idea that the visit of an Australian eleven makes a cricket season of unusual importance. But when the historian of the game reviews the nineteenth century he will say that the most important season of all was that which saw the opening of The Hospice for Old Cricketers.

The old age of cricketers has hitherto been a somewhat painful theme. At forty a man is old for cricket. In other matters he is in his prime; in politics he is still a lad. Most cricketers of forty have to give up the game, and what are they to do? A long life, one hopes, is still before them, but how can they find a worthy ending for a beginning so glorious as a career in first-class cricket? After that, any conclusion seems lame and impotent. To see a great cricketer turn to trade or some commonplace profession is painful. To have been at the top of the averages; to have been

the idol of the crowd; to have been an object of reverence to three-fourths of the men and all the boys in Great Britain; and then to come to mere humdrum, ratepaying respectability, is too painful a descent. The problem then is, How are we to make worthy use of the old age of great cricketers?

To this problem a profound but anonymous philosopher has devoted himself. His first impulse was to resort to politics. Since old cricketers are still youngish men, and oldish men are young politicians, why not combine the two callings, and let the county captain become a Parliamentary Under Secretary, and so forth, in a regular course of promotion? The crack bowler or batsman might enter the Cabinet *per saltum*. This project had some advantages—it avoided waste; but, on the whole, it was felt to be impracticable. To ask a professional cricketer, full of fire and poesy, animated by all the heroic virtues, to take a share in the pettiness of sordid political strife would be too revolting. No! not in that way lay the answer to the great problem.

Gradually the true solution dawned on the philosopher. After a career in cricket, cricket

was the only possible resort. Assisted, perhaps, by a hint in Mr. Barrie's projected Home for Geniuses, he reached this conclusion: there must be a National Home for Old Cricketers. True, it was difficult to adapt the idea. Mere literary gents might be accommodated easily enough; but cricketers are geniuses of so special a kind, that the details of the Home were more difficult of adjustment. They are all completed now, and the first worried millionaire who comes to the philosopher for advice how to spend his encumbering wealth will be permitted to found and pay for The Hospice. Once erected, it will, of course, be a national institution supported by the State, similar to the British Museum and the National Gallery, but far more interesting.

The Hospice will be a lordly pleasure house. It will stand—only one site is possible—at Lord's, filling the well-known vacant space beside the ground. Here, in a handsome building which will dwarf the poor pavilion, the cricketer, retired from the arduous practice of the game, will contemplate the struggles of his successors; and, free from cares about board and lodging (which will, of course, be

gratuitous) or about rates or taxes, the want of pence or the other vexations of public men, he will be free to bestow his ripe and mellow wisdom upon the world. The Press Box will come hither for authoritative opinions on vexed questions; to this address club secretaries and others will write (enclosing a stamp for a reply) for information on the matters on which they now consult overworked editors; here there will be a school for umpires, here a guide for coaches; here the cricketer will enjoy at once the repose of an almshouse, the animation of the world's great highways, and the dignified independence of a judge who has retired on his pension.

For no taint of charity will mar this noble foundation. Admission will be a right, vested in all players who have assisted a county for ten seasons, and in players of less lengthened service who have secured three centuries in first-class cricket, or had in any year a bowling average of less than 10. The labourer is worthy of his hire: the Civil Servant is (sometimes) more or less worthy of his pension; the Cricketer is most worthy of a fitting home and leisured competence.

Behind the main building will be covered

pitches for practising the game in the winter months, so that the veterans and the young players will meet here in friendly guise. In the Lecture Hall old cricketing hands will teach the teachers of the game, and confer diplomas upon really competent umpires. In a few years no cricketer will expect to get an engagement at a public school, or as an umpire in first-class cricket, until he has acquired by examination the degree of U.A.C. (Umpire of the Appeal Court). In the Theatre the Senate will sit, the tribunal to which an appeal from the umpires will lie; and in the Administrative Department arrangements will be made for taking the popular vote by which drawn matches in the County Championship series will be awarded to one of the contesting shires. All these matters will be managed entirely by retired players; for how could these, or any, matters be in better hands? It is contemplated by our philosopher that the functions of the M.C.C. may be transferred to the H.M.H. (Honourable Members of The Hospice) when the institution has become well known to the public.

Cricketers not yet old enough to have attained

the honour of admission to The Hospice will be welcome visitors, and those especially who are suffering from temporary disablement by injuries received in the game will be honoured guests at the generous table of the institution. Each H.M.H. will, of course, have his own suite of apartments; and in the lettered leisure of these charming rooms, perfumed by the fragrant cigars supplied by the State, many a volume of reminiscences will be penned, which in the future every schoolboy will know by heart, and the historian will seize with avidity as the only reliable materials for his work.

The courses of lectures on the game, delivered at popular "centres" of University Extension schemes by delegates from the Hospice, will be great attractions; and if, as is likely, they are inconveniently crowded, the profit to the lecturers will be greater. The Museum, in which will be shown a marvellous collection of bats and balls with which great feats have been accomplished, of score books containing the first record of these feats, and other memorials of the game, will be open to the public at the nominal fee of half-a-guinea, and will also produce a large income.

Especially curious will be the laboratory and workshop, in which the H. M. H.'s will complete a number of improvements in the materials of the game. The particulars of these inventions cannot yet be made public; but it is to be noted that the Government, with wise foresight, have already enlarged the Patent Office. A hint may, perhaps, be given without indiscretion. The bat with which you can with ease *block* a ball over the pavilion is nearly ready, and the bails which whistle automatically when the ball passes within an inch will save the bowler constant labour. And the rapid-self-drying-pitch, already perfected, will make what reporters call "blank days" on the field unknown.

These are a few of the philosopher's plans for the old age of cricketers. When the casual millionaire, anxious to transmute his dross into pure gold, arrives, the other details will be made public. Happy the man who seizes this opportunity! So shall a Man with a Muck-rake be transformed into the Good Fairy of the Green Sward. Before the twentieth century dawns, surely the last brick—nay, rather the last block of marble—will have been placed upon The Hospice.

An Autumnal Dirge

BY AN ELDERLY CRICKET ENTHUSIAST.

(Some way after Praed's "Good-Night to the Season.")

GOOD-BYE to the Season ! 'Tis over.

The Oval no longer looks gay,
Lord's well might be laid down in clover,
The ladies are off and away.
The bat makes no echoes at Brighton,
Trent Bridge hears no bump of the ball,
Old Trafford a Trappist might frighten,
And Bristol's o'erspread with a pall.
For want of some better employment,
Till GRACE, GUNN, and STODDART turn out,
I must cultivate fireside enjoyment,
And read up old scores and grow stout.

Good-bye to the Season ! Our hobbies
We *all* have, and cricket is mine ;
That two hundred and seventeen of Bobby's
Warmed up my old heart like old wine.



A GOOD INNINGS

"The Guv'nor's" long score, void of blunder,
Was good to the end, and my ears
Still ache with the eloquent thunder
Of vast and vociferous cheers.
Quidnuncs had been fudging up reasons
For ruling out ABEL, as "stale";
I hate such unsportsmanlike treasons,
And always rejoice when they fail.

Good-bye to the Season! The wickets
Were little like those of last year,
And visitors purchasing tickets
Did not drop their tanners in fear.
Most of the big matches were ended
In May, and in June, and July;
The turf, *and* the totals, were splendid,
Delighting "The Doctor's" dark eye.
Phew! Wasn't he seen in his glory?
A thousand runs tottled in May!!!
That tops e'en our Titan's own story,
That made luckless Gloucester look gay!

Good-bye to the Season! No wonder
They called it the true Year of GRACE!
He came down on all trundlers like thunder,
Still skilful to play, hit, and place.
Nine centuries notched in one Season!
His full Hundred Hundreds o'ertopped!

Small marvel our Prince, with good reason,
A "line" to "Leviathan" dropped.
With forty-seven years on his shoulders,
Jove! Can't he still open them, hey?
And he still, to the joy of beholders,
Can keep at the wickets all day.

'Tis pity he missed, by a fraction,
Top place in the Average List,
But then *he* was longer in action;
And fairness can hardly resist
The belief that the virtual topper
Is GRACE—with two innings to one!—
Though McLaren's Four Century "whopper"
Placed him first—by about half a run!
Well, here 's to the Great Testimonial!
First Batsman for years may we see
Our big, brawny, bearded, baronial,
Brave, evergreen W.G.!

Good-bye to the Season! McLAREN
All records has cut, for one score;
Nor has Cricket story been barren
In many a wonderment more.
An Indian Prince, fine and frisky,
Ran McLAREN and GRACE mighty near.
("Ramsgate-Jimmy" or "Rum-gin-an'-whisky")
He's called by the crowd, when they cheer)



A HEAVY
SCORE

Ranjitsinhji's favourite, and famous,
And well has he merited fame.
Beware, British Bats, or he'll shame us,
And that at our pet Western game!

Then RICHARDSON! *My!* what a ripper!
He's given old Surrey first place,
With KEY as a rattling good "skipper,"
And "Guv'nor" to keep up the pace.
The contest was close, and the chances
Of Lancs and of Yorks often changed;
And Gloucester has made such advances
That she within hail of them ranged.
But a'as for poor Kent! Though she's got 'em—
Fine batsmen and bowling big-pots—
The old Hop County's down at the bottom,
And 't isn't much better with Notts.

Good-bye to the Season! Poor SHREWSBURY
Sickness kept out of much fun,
And "rheumatiz" played the Old Gooseberry
E'en with the Notts giant, GUNN.
Here's wishing them both in good form again!
Middlesex STODDART, who tired,
Has lately been making it warm again!
Who more than he is admired?

Then PALAIRET, DRUCE, "Sir" O'BRIEN,
And LILLEY, and stout SAMMY WOODS,
Each has proved he's a cricketing lion;
And TOWNSEND, the boy, is "good goods."

Good-bye to the Season! There's "WALTER,"
Though luckless, is still on the job.
T'other READ, mighty MAURICE, won't falter,
There's MOLD, and boy BRIGGS, and "our Bob."
What joy, too, to see GEORGIE LOHMANN
From Africa back safe and sound!
When fit, a more dangerous foeman
Than GEORGIE is not to be found.
MEAD, PEEL!—but there, common sense teaches
That he who for "grading them" goes,
Is charging in dangerous breaches,
And treading on sensitive toes.

Good-bye to the Season! Another
Will come, with its "hundreds" and "ducks,"
Its champions, its critical pothor,
Its good and bad wickets—and lucks.
Will its weather be damper or drier?
Will it victory bring or reverse?
Will its scoring be lower or higher?
Its bowling be better or worse?

Will it bring a new bowler or batter—

A GRACE, or a STEEL, or a BLIGH?—

So it brings in "The Doctor," small matter!—

Good-bye to the Season—good-bye!



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